JANUARY 2014 / ISSUE 10

demo

the hart house music magazine

EXCLUSIVE INTERVIEW with Toronto's Top Hip Hop Producer

ARTHUR McARTHUR

Art in the Background

WHY FAMOUS MUSICIANS ARE SCORING MOVIES

III Surviving 27

Booking Your First Show

FROM THE BASEMENT TO THE STAGE, DIY OR OTHERWISE

ZOO OWL

TALKS MASKS AND ALTER EGOS IN MUSIC

INSIDE

THINGS TO BRING TO A CONCERT 4

FOUR PLACES TO SEE A SHOW FOR $5 5

"IF YOU WANT TO PRODUCE, THEN PRODUCE": AN INTERVIEW WITH ARTHUR MCARTHUR 6

UNIVERSITY OF TORONTO STUDENT MUSICIAN PROFILE 8

DEMO'S FAVOURITE ALBUMS OF 2013 9

TORONTO THE BAD: A BY-NO-MEANS DEFINITIVE GUIDE TO TORONTO'S FIRST WAVE PUNK ROCK 11

ART IN THE BACKGROUND: WHY INCREASINGLY HIGH-PROFILE MUSICIANS ARE SCORING MOVIES 12

SURVIVING 27: WHAT IT MEANS TO JOIN ONE OF THE MOST FAMOUS – AND EXCLUSIVE – CLUBS IN THE WORLD 14

MASKED INTRUDERS: ZOO OWL ON MUSICIAN ALTER EGOS 16

DIY IS THE ANSWER 18

A CHAT WITH BIG THINGS PRODUCTIONS 19

YOU ARE WHAT YOU LISTEN TO: THE LINK BETWEEN MUSIC TASTE AND PERSONALITY 21

ANATOMY OF AN ALBUM COVER: AN INTERVIEW WITH ARTIST KEITH RANKIN 22

SHUT UP AND PLAY THE HITS: THE PRICE OF ADMISSION AND THE PRICE OF ENTITLEMENT 24

WILL HE MAKE IT TO THE RAPTURE?: THE CULTURAL RELEVANCE OF ANTONY HEGARTY OF ANTONY & THE JOHNSONS 26

TORONTO MUSICIANS: WHAT'S GREAT ABOUT TORONTO'S MUSIC SCENE? 28

WHAT ARE YOU LISTENING TO? 29

demo
the hart house music magazine

JANUARY 2014 / ISSUE 10

Editor-in-Chief: Elena Gritzan, Emily Scherzinger

Layout Editor: Marko Cindric

Contributing Writers: Adam Bernhardt, Marko Cindric, Elena Gritzan, Kurt Grunsky, Al Janusis, Sian Last, Aviva Lev-Aviv, Erik Masson, Kalina Nedelcheva, Emily Scherzinger, Ayla Shiblaq, Maria Sokulsky-Dolnycky, Michael Vettese, Melissa Vincent

Photography: Elena Gritzan, Emily Scherzinger, Maria Sokulsky-Dolnycky

Cover Photo: Emily Scherzinger

Illustration: Ayla Shiblaq

Staff Advisor: Zoe Dille

Published by: Hart House, 7 Hart House Circle, Toronto, ON M5S 3H3

Printed by: Datahome Publishing Co. Ltd.

Colophone: Demo is the Hart House music magazine, a division of the Hart House music committee.

All content © 2014. Demo Magazine. All rights reserved. Any use of the contents of this publication without the express written permission of the publisher is strictly prohibited. All other trademarks are the property of their respective owners. Some of the views expressed by contributors may not be the representative views of the publisher. All photographs, unless explicitly stated, are taken by Demo contributors.

LETTER FROM THE EDITOR ELENA GRITZAN

In a way, I came to U of T to become involved in Demo. I found a copy in the Arbor Room when I was on campus for a tour and ended up spending the rest of the afternoon visiting the local record stores featured in its pages. Demo taught me that Toronto has an exciting music scene which, along with the fact that I've always loved big cities, was a huge incentive to make this city my home.

I found the magazine's table during Frosh Week's Clubs Day and signed up to write. I've always loved music and writing, so it seemed like the perfect fun thing to do between classes, but I never could have guessed how much of an impact Demo would have on my life. Since becoming an editor in my third year, Demo has taught me a lot about writing, editing, and leadership, but the real lesson I gained from the experience, and the other writing experiences it gave me the confidence to pursue, is what I want to do with my life.

I came to university thinking I wanted to be a scientist, and now I'm graduating with a goal to become a journalist. I have Demo to thank for starting me down a path that I am incredibly passionate about and enjoy doing. I'm not sure what the future holds, but I'm certainly excited to see what life beyond U of T will bring.

While I'm a little sad that this is my last ever issue of Demo, I'm excited about the content that we've put together. The cover story explores musicians who take on new personas on stage (watch out for cover star Zoo Owl – he's going to take over the world). You can read about what makes a good album cover, why musicians are increasingly signing on to score movies, and whether musicians should be considered artists or entertainers.

I'm so proud of this year's entire Demo team. One of my favourite things about the magazine is the sense of community among the team; every time we have a meeting, you can find people talking in the halls with their new friends long after we've been kicked out of the booked room. A love of music seems to have the power to bring people together in a way that nothing else does.

I want to thank all of the writers and photographers, previous editors Shauna Keddy and Assunta Alegiani for being incredibly encouraging and passing this opportunity on to me, layout editor Marko Cindric for his design skills and dedication (and awesomely similar music taste), our staff advisor Zoe Dille for guiding us through everything, and especially my co-editor Emily Scherzinger. It's going to feel weird not sending countless messages back and forth and eating all of the candy at meetings. I couldn't have asked for a better partner-in-crime.

So, bye Demo! It's been great and I couldn't be happier.

Elena

Elena Gritzan is a fourth-year double major in Chemistry and Psychology, but she's hoping to go into journalism. She is used to responding to confused stares with an explanation that writing is what she loves, and that they always need more people to write about science. She once spent a summer seeing 100 different bands across the city and is adept at dressing up as obscure musicians for Halloween.

LETTER FROM THE EDITOR EMILY SCHERZINGER

Thus far, this year has been an extreme balancing act – between school, work, and a host of other activities, I began to feel as though I had almost no time for myself. This is why I am very thankful for Demo, as it forced me into spending time with the contributors who have ended up being great friends, listening to music that I would have otherwise not have time for, and learning exciting new skills. While there were some points when Demo was absolutely stressful (the final push towards getting the print issue finalized, for example) it was always a happy stress that I enjoyed.

Demo has also allowed me to flourish in experiencing new music. When working for a music magazine, you are bound to find people with different musical tastes than you. This exposure to new music is an invaluable experience – I would never have heard of Blue Hawaii if it weren't for Marko and Elena citing *Untogether* as their favourite 2013 album, and I would not have discovered Twenty-One Pilots (their album, *Vessel*, is my pick for my favourite 2013 album) unless Sian recommended their weird rap-rock style to me. The suggestions from Demo contributors have provided me with soundtracks to sleepless, thought-inducing nights, bleary-eyed early mornings, and leisurely strolls to campus.

This is why I'm so proud of this issue of Demo – it is an astounding demonstration of the diverse musical tastes of all the contributors. In this way, there is something in this issue for everyone. Whether you're interested in punk (page 11 chronicles Toronto's first wave punk scene), soundtracks (pages 12 and 13 analyze movie scoring by famous musicians), or even Toronto's local music scene (page 5 gives ideas of where to see local music for under $5), this issue has something for all music aficionados and reluctant listeners.

My thanks go out to all of the contributors – writers, photographers, and illustrators alike – who have put astounding efforts into their contributions and have helped produce a space conducive to friendships and open discussions about music and anything else under the sun. Marko Cindric, our layout designer and writer, cannot go without thanks because of his incredible dedication that has most definitely been noticed throughout all these months. I also want to thank Zoe Dille, our staff advisor at Hart House who has held our hands through the process of making this magazine come to life. Finally, I want to thank my co-editor, Elena Gritzan, who is finishing her last year at U of T and therefore her last year as an editor of Demo. Demo will not be the same without her, and I am grateful for everything that she has taught me in journalism, leadership, time-management skills, and more.

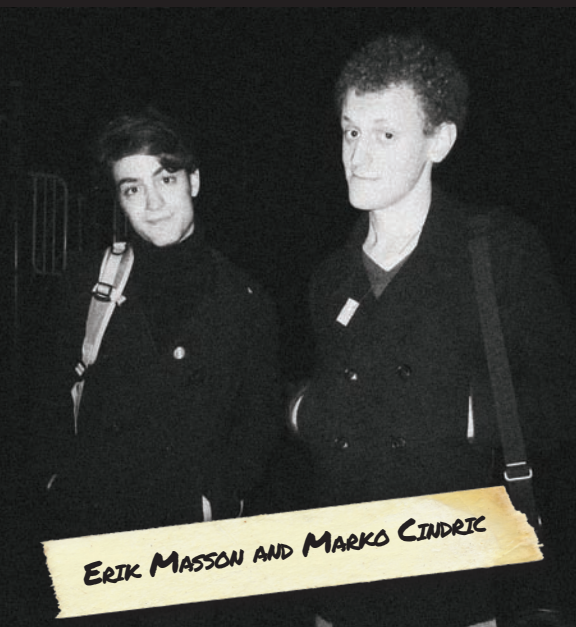
Please enjoy this issue and, hopefully, it is as much of a growth experience for you as it was for me.

Emily

Emily Scherzinger is a third-year student taking a double major in English and Women and Gender Studies. She has intense interests in cultural studies, photography, organizing things, and Led Zeppelin. She enjoys biking, reading, knitting, and doesn't enjoy being clumsy, but she is anyway.

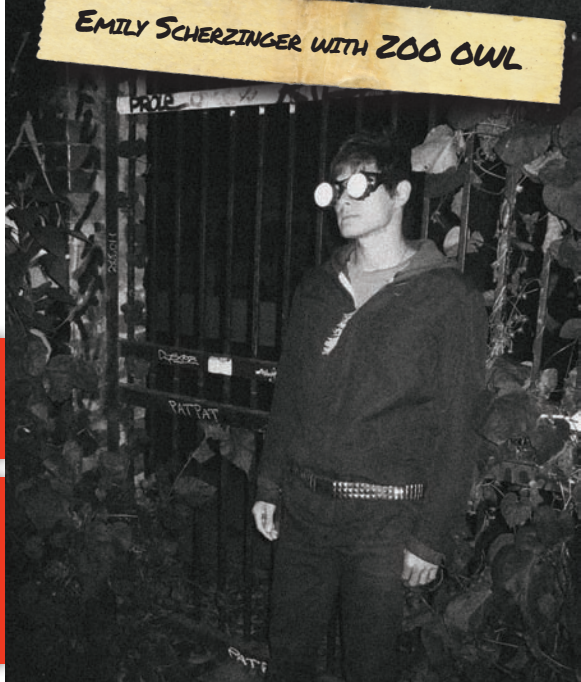
Marko Cindric is a second-year Cinema Studies major from University College, as well as an aspiring musician and music producer. He can often be found sitting on various benches around campus threatening to transfer to art school. Marko has a deep appreciation for Toronto, the likes of which could only stem from growing up in that harrowing void of arts and culture we refer to as small-town Ontario. You'll probably run into him in a record store at some point, unless he's too busy pretending to work on assignments at Starbucks.

Zoo Owl Photoshoot
Behind the Scenes



Erik Masson and Marko Cindric

Emily Scherzinger with Zoo Owl



MESSAGE FROM THE HART HOUSE STAFF ADVISOR ZOE DILLE

Hart House has been abuzz with activity so far this term. Walk down the halls and you might find students hard at play making awesome crafts and flexing their creative muscle at one of our super fun Get Crafty workshops. These guided crafting workshops celebrate all things sparkly, funky, and whimsical. Maybe you're in need of a different kind of relaxation and want to take advantage of our ever popular Massage Monday and get a free shiatsu mini massage. At Hart House we encourage you to "Create Your Own Adventure," explore the spaces, alcoves, rooms, and facilities that are available, and make the most of your outside the classroom knowledge by experiencing community, interesting panel discussions, alternative films, or even cooking a meal with your fellow students at one of our Community Kitchens. We always make room for informal and friendly learning communities — mixing the key ingredients of students, campus professionals, and community together for magical and inspiring get-togethers.

If you're a music lover (and we hope that you are if you're reading Demo), there is music in every corner of Hart House. Some of you might be familiar with our seven musical groups spanning everything from a traditional a cappella jazz choir to an 80 piece orchestra, or some of you might have frequented our dynamic Friday night jazz concerts or explored the classical and world music stage in our Sunday Concerts. Hart House is alive with tone, phrasing, instruments, and vocals. Music spills out into our hallways throughout the day when students play on our Steinway pianos, staff are hard at work to the beats of the latest iTunes sensation, or one of our groups are rehearsing for their latest concert. Music is in the air we breathe.

Our university radio station CIUT, the last downtown university station on the FM dial after the unfortunate demise of Ryerson's CKLN, is alive and well and also offers up an eclectic array of music, spoken word, and talk radio. Demo aspires to bring you a wide array of musical genres, performer profiles, and local, global, and academic perspectives to its analysis and opinions.

This year we welcome another group of eager contestants to our U of T Idol competition and aspiring student performers to our Midday Mosaics lunchtime concert series. The Demo team is hard at work as always, bringing you the best in Canadian music perspectives and making sure you are in the know in print and online.

Exciting things are happening here — new partnerships associated with the Pan Am Path, our sneaker Design Project promoting all things sneaker, and lots of music and social action.

At Hart House there is always a door open, a room beckoning, or a cosy couch with your name on it.

We invite you into the pages of Demo and hope to see you back online and in our hallways!

WHAT TO BRING TO A CONCERT

CONGRATULATIONS, YOU FINALLY GOT A TICKET TO SEE YOUR FAVOURITE BAND! DEMO THINKS THAT PRE-CONCERT EXCITEMENT IS THE BEST FEELING YOU CAN HAVE. CHANNEL SOME OF THAT EXCITEMENT INTO GETTING PREPARED BY GATHERING THE ITEMS BELOW.

1. KLEENEX – It might be cold standing in line and this is way better than scratchy paper towel from the bar washroom.
2. READING MATERIAL – Grab something in a box on the street outside. Perfect for when you're bored and there's nothing new on Twitter.
3. YOUR PHONE – Necessary to call a cab, meet up with friends, and pretend you aren't awkward between sets.
4. THE ADDRESS OF THE VENUE – Nothing worse than getting lost just as your favourite act goes on.
5. COMFORTABLE CLOTHES WITH EASILY REMOVABLE LAYERS – Don't want to hit people in the face as you shimmy out of your hoodie.
6. ID – Nothing worse than getting turned away at the last minute!
7. CASH – You'll want something at the bar or a cab ride home, trust us.
8. YOUR TICKET – Most important concert accessory!
9. COMFORTABLE SHOES – As much as you may want to show off your favourite new heels or pinchy but awesome dress shoes, save them for another night. You'll be on your feet for hours, and hopefully dancing.

MEDIA PHOTO

MEDIA PHOTO

MEDIA PHOTO

FOUR PLACES TO SEE A SHOW FOR $5

ELENA GRITZAN

Turning 19 is probably one of the most exciting moments for a dedicated music fan. Your whole world opens up; you can finally go and see any band, at any time, in any venue. But we're students after all, and that is practically synonymous with being on a budget. As much of a spectacle attending a show at the Air Canada Centre or even the Mod Club may be, most of us cannot afford to spend upwards of $50 on a single night of fun.

For those interested in seeing as much music as possible, the smaller-scale venue becomes a more viable option. Besides saving you enough money to buy a coffee in the morning, seeing a show at any of the below venues is almost always guaranteed to expand your taste, introduce you to exciting new bands, or at least give you a story to talk about.

Handlebar

159 Augusta Avenue
(Pictured, Above Left)

Located at the bottom end of Kensington Market, this cozy bar features a long room, some fantastic couches, and music-loving staff. Much of the week is filled with a variety of DJs, and you can stuff yourself with an eclectic mix of bands on the weekends.

Holy Oak

1241 Bloor Street West

Located next to Lansdowne Station, this homely haunt is well worth the trek on the subway. Each table is lit by candlelight, and payment for shows often happens by passing around a jar. They also have some pretty incredible food to entice you back the next day.

The Tranzac

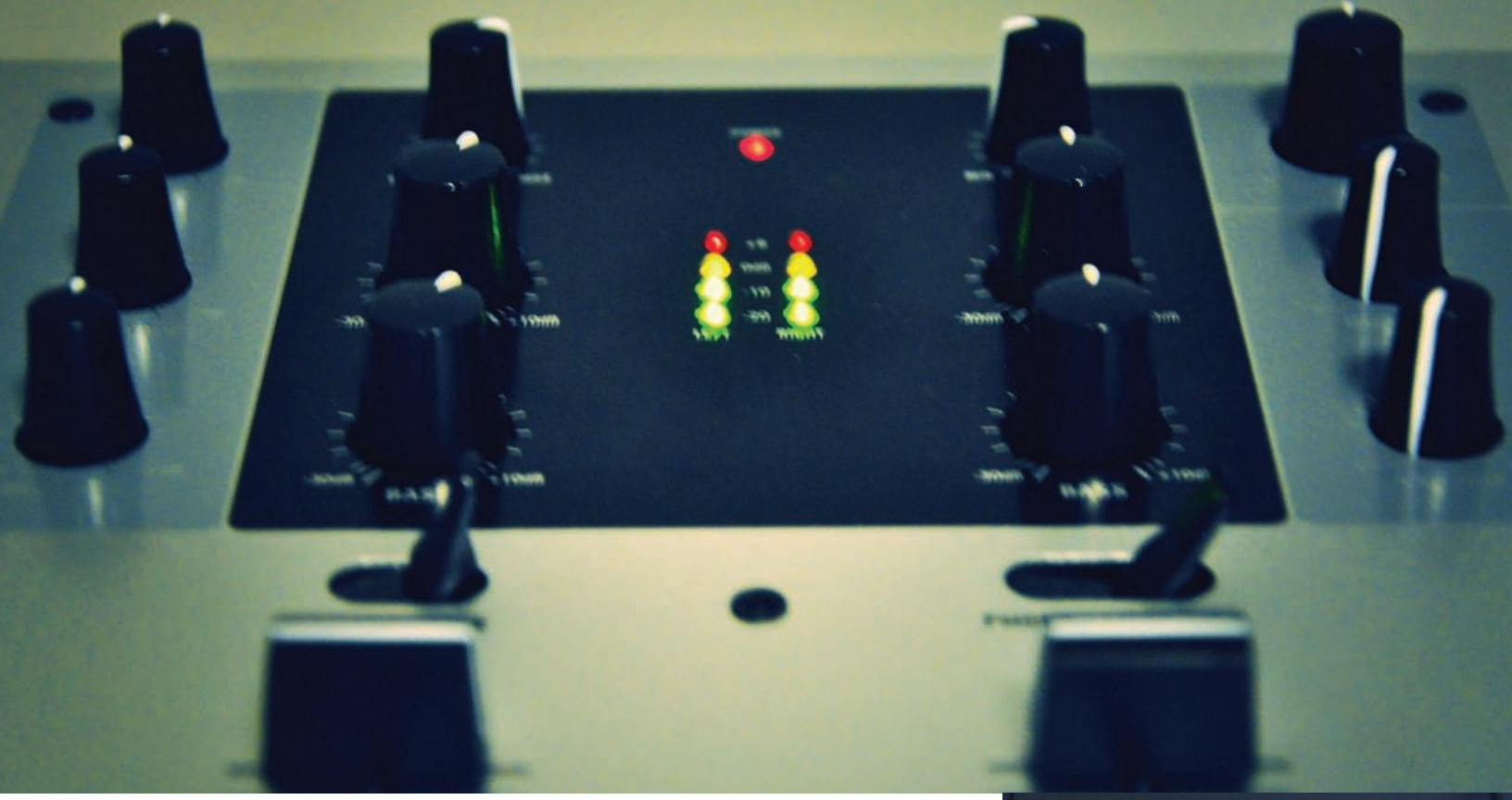
292 Brunswick Avenue
(Pictured, Above Middle)

Just south of Bloor on Brunswick Avenue, the Tranzac has three different rooms and a whole lot of heart. The home of many folk, jazz, and experimental scenes, you're sure to have a relaxing night at this local treasure.

Hart House

7 Hart House Circle
(Pictured, Above Right)

Did you know that you can see a wide variety of music right here on campus? The Hart House Music Committee puts on a range of shows, including independent rock, jazz, classical, open mic nights, and singing competitions. These events are all free, so use that extra $5 to buy a snack at Sammy's Student Exchange.



"IF YOU WANT TO PRODUCE, THEN PRODUCE"

AN INTERVIEW WITH ARTHUR MCARTHUR

MICHAEL VETTESE

I'm waiting for Arthur McArthur in front of St. Lawrence Market on a brisk Sunday afternoon. My eyes are peeled for a guy with a bushy beard, which is about the only thing I could decipher about him from the one picture I could find on Google, but there are no bearded guys in sight. I check his text once again to make sure I'm standing in the right spot. Seems like it. His number has a 310 area code; what city is that — New York maybe? I look up from my phone and see a guy with a black Canada Goose jacket, a green toque, black Nike runners, and a thick beard coming my way – it's Arthur McArthur.

McArthur is a born-and-bred Toronto hip hop producer. He's 25 years old, but has already been in the game for five years. His career took off with the track "Uptown" on Drake's seminal mixtape *So Far Gone*. As far I know, it's the only song that samples Billy Joel's "Uptown Girl," and after "Best I Ever Had," it's the most infectious track off the mixtape. Featuring heavy hitters Lil Wayne and Bun B, it was a huge break for the young producer. He was 20 and still in school when *So Far Gone* dropped. "After 'Uptown,' I was like, 'I'm gonna make hip hop my job.'"

I ask him about the area code, and he explains that 310 is L.A., a place "you practically need to be in if you want to make it in this industry." He's part of a legion of Canadian émigrés in the post-*Thank Me Later* era who are finally being given the opportunity to show their chops after

a seemingly endless period of disregard for Canadian hip hop. Before Drake (B.D. let's call it), "a producer in Toronto might be working his craft for four, five years without any recognition, no money, because we were just so far from the centre of the industry." The situation has changed dramatically in recent years, and most of McArthur's friends in L.A. are actually Canadian.

You cannot mistake McArthur's success as the result of Canada's most famous rapper, though. It's still a long road between Canadians and the meccas of hip hop, such as Los Angeles and New York. The situation isn't much different from the NBA, where a small number of Canadians have achieved massive success (Steve Nash as an analog to Drake), but the vast majority remains American. So while he's living the dream in L.A., he achieved that by virtue of his talent.

One might say that the dearth of recognition for hip hop in Toronto created an environment based on skill and capability. "Look, in Atlanta you might be making beats for a year, and if one of them gets picked up by a hot artist and gets airplay, you could make $750,000 and just get lazy. That would never happen here, there just aren't as many opportunities. So in Toronto, we had to be better than everyone else in order to get recognized." McArthur rose to the top of a small core of highly creative producers to get to where he is now. Consider that Toronto has spawned producers like Boi-1da (who has worked with Nas, Kanye, and Talib Kweli, among others), and most recently WondaGurl, the seventeen-year-old phenom who produced "Crown" on *Magna Carta…Holy Grail*), it's clear Toronto is punching above its weight.

Talking with McArthur, a few things are plain to see: he's an intelligent guy, he's humble, and he's grateful for the exposure he's attained at such a young age. His background isn't what you would call typical of those in hip hop, though. "My family is really artistic, and I actually went to UCC on a full-scholarship for academics." Was there a hip hop scene there? "Not really, except for me and friend Rohan, we really got into Wu[-Tang Clan]. *36 Chambers* but especially *The W*. It just represented a rebelliousness that we really identified with." He also studied RCM piano while growing up. "I think I got up to Grade 10, and then I started smoking pot," he says with a laugh. "That didn't mesh so well with piano. I was showing up to my lessons and forgetting my pieces. I'm pretty sure she knew I was high. There was no hiding the smell of that dank."

That formal musical training proved to be important though, giving him a musical advantage over his peers. "I would strongly recommend any up-and-coming producer to take piano lessons. Just to know chord progressions and how to improvise are really key. Not even from a creativity standpoint, but from a workflow standpoint. Instead of taking three minutes to work out a chord progression it might take you ten seconds if you've taken some piano lessons."

I ask him if he has any advice for people who want to get into producing. "I had a buddy hit me up the other day, telling me he wants to become a producer and was asking me how. I told him just start. If you want to produce, then produce. After high school, I spent a year to focus on producing. The timing wasn't right, and it took a couple of years to achieve some kind of success, but that was an important decision to make. I didn't know what I was doing at first, but I got better by doing that. My first beats were not that good compared to a lot of people. I mean, I was playing people my beats, and they were just not it. But I always thought my beats were ready for Jay-Z, you know. That's just the relationship I've always had with my music, and you kind of need that confidence. People also worry about getting the right equipment, but honestly, don't worry about that. All I had was a laptop with a copy of Fruity Loops and a MIDI controller, and that's basically what I still use today. And it's great that hip hop is growing in Toronto. We have competitions like Battle of the Beatmakers, we have the Mixtape Project, we have people writing articles about it. Thankfully, we're in a metropolitan city where you have a shot at blowing up."

After "Uptown," McArthur was behind a number of sleeper hits in 2011 and 2012, appearing on Big Sean's *Finally Famous* and Rick Ross's *Rich Forever* mixtape. He's hit a new gear in 2013, with tracks on Chris Brown's *X*, Pusha T's *Wrath of Caine* mixtape, and even Lonely Island's *The Wack Album*. The scary thing is that the year's success might not be over yet. "I plan on finishing 2013 strong. I have a few more tricks up my sleeve," he says with a sly smile.

Michael Vettese is in his final year of a double major in German and Biology. He currently splits his time between studying, playing basketball at Hart House, and reading German rap magazines. He enjoys performing on stage, such as stand-up and theatre, but is still recovering from the trauma of his last hip hop karaoke performance, in which he forgot the words. He plans to come back strong with a rendition of Geto Boys' "Mind Playing Tricks on Me."

BEAMS (MEDIA PHOTO)

Maria Sokulsky-Dolnycky is a fourth year student majoring in Linguistics and minoring in German Studies and Music History & Culture. A native Torontonian, she likes to go on exploratory bike rides through the greener outskirts of the city and frequents concert venues and dive bars in its heart. When not daydreaming, reveling in nostalgia, and listening to music (experimental and art rock are among her preferred genres), Maria devours French New Wave films and enjoys photographing the sights in her native West End.

UNIVERSITY OF TORONTO STUDENT MUSICIAN PROFILE

ANNA MERNIEKS OF BEAMS

MARIA SOKULSKY-DOLNYCKY

NAME: Anna Mernieks (of Beams)

YEAR OF STUDY: Fifth

PROGRAM: Specialist in Forest Conservation Science, Minor in Geographical Information Systems

INSTRUMENTS: Banjo, vocals, some guitar

MUSICAL BACKGROUND: Anna started off playing the recorder when she was in third grade and moved on to the guitar in sixth. The recorder led her to pursue the saxophone at an arts high school, where she met a girl who also played guitar with whom she started a band. This got Anna into the music scene and got her into songwriting. Since then, Anna has fallen in love with writing songs and has not stopped. She sometimes sings and plays on other people's projects but is mostly focusing on her own material for the time being.

A BIT ABOUT BEAMS: Beams consists of Keith Hamilton on saw, his brother Dave Hamilton on mandolin, Craig Moffatt on bass, Martin Crawford on lap steel guitar, Heather Mazhar on vocals, Mike Duffield on drums, and Anna on vocals and banjo. Beams plays in the folk tradition, but with a sort of hybrid of bluegrass and rock instrumentation. The band calls it "art-country indie folk rock" for the time being. Beams' debut album, *Just Rivers*, was released on May 14, 2013 on CD and digitally.

INSPIRATIONS / INFLUENCES: Anna listens to a diverse array of music, and when something moves her, it makes her want to create something that sounds like it. Most recently she has been moved by songs by Creedence Clearwater Revival and War on Drugs. Once she has an idea in her head, it becomes a challenge to make it work, and that makes her see it through. The same idea works when she is learning other people's music as well – Anna likes the challenge of learning it and making it sound tasteful.

PROUDEST MOMENT / BIGGEST ACCOMPLISHMENT AS A MUSICIAN: Anna's biggest accomplishment as a musician has been writing songs that engage musicians and non-musicians alike. She is constantly amazed at how loyal the band is and how her fellow bandmates are still interested in working with her ideas. The songs would not be what they are without them. She was extremely proud when the album came out and the band got international reviews and four N's in NOW. Anna was also very proud of the album itself and how the band managed to create the sound (with Peter J. Moore's help) that she had always dreamed of for the songs. Additionally, she is proud that the band managed to remain a group of seven for this long. Every day she is amazed by the commitment that everyone brings forth, especially for a project that is really a labour of love where the reward is sometimes intangible or elusive.

FUTURE PLANS: Beams has just received a FACTOR demo grant, so the band is going to write and record over the winter and release an EP in the spring. Find Beams on Facebook (/beamstheband), Twitter (@BEAMStheband), and check out the band's website (banjobeams.com) for blog posts, photos, music, and show information.

demo's FAVOURITE ALBUMS 2013

Colin Stetson
New History Warfare Vol. 3: To See More Light
(Jazz / Experimental)

As the name implies, Colin Stetson's newest record is the third installment in a series examining the themes of war, devastation, grief, and loss, all of which figure prominently in his fluttering waves of bass saxophone. Vol. 3 is perhaps his strongest work yet. The pounding intensity of "Brute" and "Hunted" evoke a world of pain, the distorted cries and screams of Stetson's instrument and the clicking and clacking of his fingers suggest an apocalyptic frenzy. This album goes to some dark places to be sure, but the skyward trajectories of "Among the Sef (Righteous II)" or album centrepiece, the 15 minute title track, imply the uniquely human capacity for optimism amidst ruination. At times fragile and violent, silent and obstreperous, Stetson has easily proven himself as an artist with this tour de force.

— Adam Bernhardt

Blue Hawaii ***Untogether***
(Electronic)

Written cross-country in a series of e-mail exchanges, Blue Hawaii's *Untogether* converges the feelings of emotional disconnect, pervasive isolation, and existential unease familiar to many university students. It is like a candle in a cement basement; the listener relies on the flickering heat of lines like "may as well just be me" to ward off the frost of icy, spacious synths. Vocalist Raphaelle Standell-Preston's hillside of tender whispers and shrieks create a singular yet cohesive sonic experience that cements Blue Hawaii's status as one of the most exciting up-and-coming acts of this year.

— Elena Gritzan and Marko Cindric

Twenty One Pilots ***Vessel***
(Rap Rock)

I have had a mad obsession with *Vessel* by Twenty One Pilots for all of 2013 – no matter what other albums try to tear me away, I always return to their latest effort. Playing the album all the way through takes you on a personal journey full of death, fear, mental illness, and more, all the while keeping you entranced with intense drum beats and beautifully poetic lyrics. In my opinion, the absolute best aspect of this album is a tie between the ridiculously catchy tempo changes and the huge shout-out to "Lean Wit It, Rock Wit It" by Dem Franchize Boyz in the second song, "Holding on to You."

— Emily Scherzinger

Queens of the Stone Age ***…Like Clockwork***

(Rock)

The hype leading up to the sixth studio album by grimy rock band Queens of the Stone Age was justified not only by their long hiatus, but also by the announced collaborations with guest artists, including Dave Grohl, Alex Turner, Elton John, and the band's former bassist Nick Oliveri. *…Like Clockwork* consists of ten stoner-sounding tracks where melody is preferred over heaviness and the desert rock notion is used to its full extent. The sinister, gothic art only adds to Josh Homme's insightful warnings in "Smooth Sailing": "God only knows, so mind your behaviour." The lead singer's villainous voice dominates the dirty bass line with full intensity, but gives way to the exceptional guitar solos which have your head banging like there is no tomorrow.

— Kalina Nedelcheva

Vampire Weekend ***Modern Vampires of the City***

(Rock / Pop)

Vampire Weekend have always seemed like that pleasant band in the background—not exactly attention-grabbing, but I enjoyed them when I heard them. They have come into their own with *Modern Vampires*. Ezra Koenig's powerful lyrics reflect on aging and death in uncertain times, while the music is some of the best-composed pop in recent memory, drawing influence from Paul Simon, disco, rockabilly, and maybe a touch of Brian Eno's meticulous production tricks. The music and lyrics even come together on the old / new theme—see the quick shifts from Buddy Holly-style pop to electro-rock on one of the year's best singles, "Diane Young," or the Bach-meets-hip-hop, "Step."

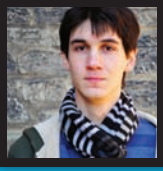
— Kurt Grunsky

Ducktails ***The Flower Lane***

(Dream Pop)

If there's one thing I know for sure, it's that Matt Mondanile knows how to make a guitar sing. Best known as the guitarist of Real Estate, Ducktails is Mondanile's ever-growing side-project. Boasting a collection of sherbet-smooth tracks that are at once chilled-out and groovy, *The Flower Lane* never fails to mellow me out. Punchy synths, spaced-out guitars and soft, nonchalant vocals make for a soothing and pleasant combination. This record is quite a departure from Mondanile's earlier work, trading in the lo-fi sound for one that is polished and slick, but even so, Ducktails manages to retain the cool, dreamy sound that it's known for.

— Maria Sokulsky-Dolnycky



Kurt Grunsky is a first year humanities student who believes in the power of pop music and the importance of criticism. If that sounds pretentious, that's probably because he's a little pretentious himself. He enjoys both writing music and writing about it, taking particular interest in hip hop and the post-punk scene from the 70s onwards. He also plays guitar and sings in a band in Ottawa.

THE VILETONES (MEDIA PHOTO)

THE CURSE (PHOTO BY DAN HUZIAK)

TEENAGE HEAD (MEDIA PHOTO)

TORONTO THE BAD

A BY-NO-MEANS DEFINITIVE GUIDE TO TORONTO'S FIRST WAVE PUNK ROCK

BY ADAM BERNHARDT

Recently, I was at BYOV (bring your own vinyl) night at The Communist's Daughter on Dundas Street, where I brought *And now live from Toronto…The Last Pogo*, a 1979 compilation of various bands that made up the Toronto scene. A girl next to me asked me if I knew what was playing, so I told her that it was all Toronto punk bands from the 70s. Her immediate response was something along the lines of, "Really? This is actually good."

This reaction is all but indicative of a general trend towards Toronto's first wave punk scene. I am almost certain that most people can recount the history of CBGBs and the Ramones over the Crash 'n' Burn and The Diodes, or even The Viletones. For a city that aspires to be world-class and prizes itself on its cultural achievements, Toronto tends to look elsewhere for inspiration often at the expense of our own talent.

Perhaps this is nowhere more apparent than our cultural amnesia towards Toronto's early punk scene, without which we would not enjoy the rich diversity of independent infrastructure that we do today. One has to take into account the fact that before the rise of punk, Toronto was "Toronto the Good," a boring, button-down Protestant city with bars that closed early and usually employed cover bands. By offering an alternative space for underground bands and artists, Toronto's punk scene laid the foundations for the indie world into the 1980s and beyond.

So the obvious question then becomes, where does one start? In a literary vein, there have been some serious efforts at uncovering and examining the Toronto punk scene.

Sam Sutherland's *Perfect Youth* takes a broad perspective by surveying punk rock in Canada from Victoria to Cape Breton, but with considerable attention paid to Toronto.

Liz Worth's *Treat Me Like Dirt* is an excellent starting point, as it focuses primarily on Toronto and southern Ontario with most attention paid to the years between 1977-1981, but does expand on the pre-punk years and what came after. Drawing on extensive interviews with key participants, *Treat Me Like Dirt* gives a sense of the grit and the glory of the early years with an unflinching look at the often violent and drug-fueled rock n'roll life. Bands from nearby Hamilton get a good word in too, with Simply Saucer, Teenage Head, and perennial arbiters of good taste the Forgotten Rebels given equal importance.

The mammoth phonebook of Canadian indie rock, *Have Not Been The Same*, devotes a considerable amount of time tracing the roots of Toronto's indie scene in the 1980s to the efforts of the first wave punk bands.

As for the actual music, much of it was never properly documented which has probably contributed to its obscurity. Often paired up with clueless producers who added too much sheen or removed too much bite, many of the first wave bands left shaky recording legacies — this is supposing they ever got near a recording studio, as some live on solely through soundboard recordings and live bootlegs.

Regardless, there is a certain scrappy energy that more than makes up for it. The Diodes' power pop hooks and visceral spark, apparent in songs like "Tired of Waking Up Tired" and "Child Star," made them one of the most important groups of the Toronto scene. The Viletones' backstreet thuggery and primitive sleaze coupled with frontman Steven Leckie's violent self-abuse brought a potent sense of danger to their proto-hardcore numbers like "Screaming Fist."

Toronto punk, like elsewhere, incubated many female-fronted bands such as the B-Girls and The Curse. Much like the stylistic split between The Diodes and The Viletones, The B-Girls played vigorous chiming anthems while The Curse are most renowned for their menacing single "Shoeshine Boy" about underage prostitution and murder on Yonge Street. Many queer acts also emerged during these years — bands such as the Dishes and Fifth Column examined gender and contemporary life through a critical lens adding a cerebral edge to the Toronto scene.

This is by no means the final word about Toronto's first wave. Many bands have been left out but that is no reflection of their quality. The legacy of the first wave can be hard to discern — Larry's Hideaway, the Beverly Tavern, and the Colonial Underground have all closed — but the everlasting Horseshoe Tavern keeps that history alive. Albums by many of these bands can sometimes be found collecting dust in the used discount section of record stores throughout the city, which is perhaps the greatest tragedy of all. However, interest is growing, as a new Colin Burton documentary, *The Last Pogo Jumps Again*, casts a spotlight on Toronto's first wave punk scene, and the recent revival of fascination are all positive signs. Maybe the day when pimply, awkward teenagers wear Teenage Head shirts instead of Ramones shirts is not too far off.

Adam Bernhardt is a fourth-year (god willing) History specialist, writer, and completely amateur photographer. He has been spat on by Michael Gira, kicked in the head by Elias Ronnenfelt, and had a chair thrown at him by the well-kempt frontman of a completely lacklustre synth-pop band. Years of attending high volume concerts have ensured his premature deafness. He once shook hands with Michael Cera, and has yet to wash that hand. He can be found in Robarts, tenth floor men's room, third stall, knock three times. M4anyone.

ART IN THE BACKGROUND

THE GREAT GATSBY (MEDIA PHOTO)

WHY INCREASINGLY HIGH-PROFILE MUSICIANS ARE SCORING MOVIES

AYLA SHIBLAQ

Film soundtracks are often overlooked by most. They are in the background, of course, and the foreground is the film you are watching.

Like many, I was one to overlook scores and soundtracks until my outlook was drastically changed. As I was doing my yearly pilgrimage of scrolling through the "best of" lists in and around the New Year, I found one list recommending the soundtrack of the movie *Drive*. I listened to it, fell in a deep, undying love for it, played it on repeat (and still do), bought it on vinyl, and from then on, film soundtracks became a large component of my music library. However, what separates the *Drive* soundtrack from every other soundtrack is the fact that it is the forefront of the film. Nicolas Winding Refn, the director of the film, made sure the dialogue throughout would be sparse to let the soundtrack shine – an interesting artistic choice for something that is typically only used in specific scenes and not in an entire film. So, why would any artist volunteer their work to be the background and not the foreground?

Removing one's art from the foreground comes with a new set of rules that in many ways disrupt conventional creative processes. Musicians are no longer the centre of attention and are restricted to the background, where the feelings they hope to express in song are only setting the mood for the characters in the film. The music no longer establishes a relationship between the artist and the listener, and its purpose is to instead set the tone for the viewer and the characters, essentially acting as a mere accessory. Then why are artists recently — especially big name artists — volunteering to be an accessory?

Famous musicians volunteering to make soundtracks for films is not unknown to the music industry. In the past, The Beatles have recorded their own soundtracks to their own films including *Yellow Submarine*. Then, big name artists recorded soundtracks for films they had no relation to, including the legendary Simon and Garfunkel scoring *The Graduate* and Queen's soundtrack for *Flash Gordon*. In many cases, some of the artist's largest successes came from movie soundtracks, such as Prince's *Purple Rain*.

First of all, who volunteers to be an accessory? Recently, Jay-Z recorded "100$ Bill" for *The Great Gatsby* soundtrack, after a special

THE CANYONS (MEDIA PHOTO)

screening from the director, Baz Luhrmann, and a suggestion that he should produce the soundtrack. After the success that both the film and the soundtrack garnered, it is pretty obvious as to why Jay-Z would agree: he was given the opportunity to set the mood for the Jazz Age with a modern day twist with an incredibly well-known director. But not all artists have the same opportunity to work in such an environment where their work will be publicized the way *The Great Gatsby* was.

The Canyons, a film directed by Paul Schrader of *Taxi Driver* fame, with a script written by Bret Easton Ellis, the genius behind *American Psycho* and *Less Than Zero*, had an incredible score created by Broken Social Scene's Brendan Canning with Ryan Kondrat and John Le Magna, who are referred to as Me&-John on the album. Unfortunately, this score was not one that received the popularity it deserved. First of all, the film was not well-publicized, and the people who actually saw the film did not particularly like it. Of course Brendan Canning was not too pleased, and with good reason. He volunteered his art to be in the background of a film and did an incredible job of transforming the way the viewer would see the film. Canning, in an interview with *Exclaim!*, expressed pride for his work, but acknowledged that if the film is not a hit, then it is difficult for your score to get noticed. With this risk in mind, artists still continue to compose scores.

Daft Punk often have a visual accompaniment to their music, one of the reasons why they agreed to compose the *Tron Legacy* score. Jon Hopkins is a frequent composer of soundtracks, including ones for *Monster* and, more recently, *How I Live Now*. Hopkins composes scores because he finds enjoyment in collaborating with artists including Brian Eno, as he says in an interview with Futuresequence. However, both Daft Punk and Hopkins could never make a living out of soundtracking movies. It seems as though the common theme between all artists who compose scores or produce soundtracks for films is simple: scores and soundtracks are an occasional project chosen as a different kind of outlet. It is a change to escape the constant pressure of releasing independent work and working with new mediums as well as new people. The risk with this new realm of work, unfortunately, is it may not be appreciated or even discovered.

The soundtrack realm is a mixture of two extremes: extremely well-known, or extremely ignored. In the music world, it makes sense — as listeners, we are already exposed to music that is meant for our listening pleasure; the music is made solely for the artist and listener experience. If you are not a music connoisseur who seeks out good soundtracks, then they are pretty hard to come by unless they are recommended to you by others. Personally, I would have never discovered the *Drive* album or *The Canyons* if I hadn't read about them. Then, the differences between scores and soundtracks must be taken into consideration. For many listeners, instrumental music is not as appealing as lyrical music, unlike soundtracks, which are modeled more in accordance with that of a playlist containing primarily lyrical music. This would explain the popularity divide between albums like *Tron Legacy* and *The Great Gatsby* — lyrics will attract more listeners than instrumental tracks.

Despite the many factors and the possibility of failure, I would say that without a soundtrack, a film is bland. It has no pizzazz or character, and I feel as though this is the underlying reason as to why musicians relegate their art to the background of a film. Yes, they will be commissioned by directors to create the soundtrack, or in some cases, volunteer, but why scoring soundtracks is a growing trend is the ability to add something important to a film — something that is under-appreciated yet so important it could change the course of how any viewer sees a film.

Ayla Shiblaq is a first-year student from Victoria College studying political science. She enjoys long walks to the fridge, sifting through record bins, and avoiding any conversations regarding the Broken Social Scene hiatus. If she's not at a concert, she's probably looking for a way to get into a concert. She hopes one day to learn how to play the banjo and start a folk band or just go into politics – whichever comes first.

SURVIVING 27

WHAT IT MEANS TO JOIN ONE OF THE MOST FAMOUS – AND EXCLUSIVE – CLUBS IN THE WORLD

KALINA NEDELCHEVA

Jimi Hendrix, 27, death by asphyxiation. Brian Jones, 27, death by drowning. Janis Joplin, 27, death by heroin overdose. Jim Morrison, 27, death by heart failure. Kurt Cobain, 27, death by suicide. Amy Winehouse, 27, death by alcohol poisoning. Some of these deaths are still being reinvestigated.

The building pillars, the most famous members of Club 27, are all musicians. What they have in common is not only their age and career choice, but the conspiracy behind their deaths. Left unsolved, the "cause of death" is merely a presumption of the public eye.

According to Freud, "the death instinct" shows that humans are prone to violent behaviours, including suicide, the fourteenth most common cause of death, as ranked by the World Health Organization. But why would one turn to such extreme measures?

Many would point to depression as the main cause of these self-inflicted tragedies. Some of the factors of depression include family genes, writer's block, tragedies, and/or pressure. Faced with the question of what this phenomenon really is, Pat Durish, a clinical social worker and course instructor at the University of Toronto, replied, "Depression is a subcortical response to stimuli that exceeds the individual's capacity to tolerate and regulate affect."

Surely, musicians could be at risk because of the expectations of the public and the music industry towards artists to create something bigger and better than their previous work. People are vicious and society, as we all are well aware, can make even the most confident of all feel insecure in their own abilities. Fans treat their favourite artists as godlike figures, not as human beings. Thus, when an artist makes a simple mistake, everyone blows the situation out of proportion, a heavy weight for someone to carry on their shoulders. As Janis Joplin says in her last interview, four days before her death, "For me it was really important if people were gonna accept me or not."

It is well believed that those who are most creative have more than the average amount of energies. They dig deep into their own soul and get in touch with their own spirit. Their emotions are magnified, because they rely on these emotions to create their art. And from here stream the hardest questions: "Who am I?" "Why am I here?" Unsurprisingly, what they most often find is that those questions do not have a definite answer. Then why live if there is no meaning to life? The thought in itself is depressing.

"Triggers for depression are also going to be deeply personal — reflective of someone's life experiences and character strategies. It is reasonable that many creative individuals will find the demand to produce in accordance with market expectations, rather than in sync with their own creative rhythm, to be dysregulating and therefore act as a trigger to throw them into depression," stated Durish, to clarify the origin of depression.

What Cobain, Hendrix, Joplin, and the others had in common was that they were extremely talented, intelligent, and yet very emotionally unstable and insecure. A recent book by Howard Sounes, *Amy, 27: Amy Winehouse and the 27 Club*, states, "Several of the 27s showed signs of mood or personality disorders from an early age, conditions that border mental illness," and this, accompanied with the music industry — a business in which drugs and alcohol are a large part of the culture — constructs a recipe for self-destruction.

JIMI HENDRIX (DAVID REDFERN)

BRIAN JONES (DAVID FARRELL)

JANIS JOPLIN (JAN PERSSON)

JIM MORRISON (MICHAEL OCHS)

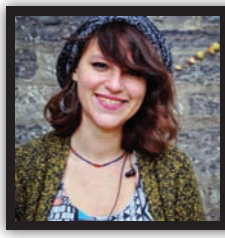
AMY WINEHOUSE (MARK ALLAN)

If we look into the family history and early childhood of each musician mentioned above, we can see strange patterns that might, in a way, justify their substance abuse: Brian Jones was described as bipolar by Linda Lawrence, a woman with which he had a child in the 60s; Hendrix has a poor and dysfunctional family; Morrison, raised with great discipline, sang about killing his father and having sex with his mother in "The End"; Cobain had a history of odd behaviour and violent deaths in his family, which led him to believe he had the "suicide genes"; and Joplin was openly insecure. Amy Winehouse, the most recent member in the club, had a history of substance abuse and self-destructive behaviour since she was a teenager. But the most serious problems began in 2006 with the release of her award winning album, *Back to Black*, as she became addicted to crack cocaine and heroin. Although she quit hard drugs in 2008, she did so by switching to alcohol and finally meeting her death in 2011.

What I would like to ask is this: is there a rock star who hasn't tried cocaine, or a musician who hasn't drawn inspiration from the dark side of their lives? Accompanied by the drugs and alcohol, opening doors that are usually closed for the sober brain, one couldn't help but wonder, what if all the deaths by overdose were merely a disguise for suicides? And yet Durish tells me that suicidality can be conscious or unconscious, which forces us to look for signs of depression in the few months before the (un)expected deaths.

Many doctors warned Amy Winehouse that she might die soon, but she laughed about it and didn't take it seriously. Many of Joplin's friends died by overdose and she had experienced one or two, according to her old friend, Patti Smith, but that didn't stop her from taking heroin one last time. On a deeper level, one can argue, Joplin knew what was going to happen. And many deaths like Morrison's, Jones', and Hendrix's are left with a big question mark at the end, since no one was there to witness their death.

So what might be drawn from all the facts? Is the 27 Club full of really "tortured artists" or people with troubled pasts that successfully channeled their depression to creating some of the most iconic albums/songs of the century? This theory can never be proven due to the wide variety of depression in artistic and non-artistic individuals. One truth can be drawn from the 27 Club deaths, though: if one truly thinks of committing suicide, they won't always seek the help of their family, friends, or psychologist. Their family — and in the case of Jimi, Janis, and Jim, the rest of the world — might be left oblivious and in the dark to what has happened.



Kalina Nedelcheva is a first year student in Book and Media Studies who enjoys reading, writing, horror movies, and dark stuff. She has been head-banging and mosh-pitting at concerts since birth. She enjoys her daily twenty cups of coffee and loves to explore new music in the punk, rock, and alternative genres.

MASKED INTRUDERS

ZOO OWL ON MUSICIAN ALTER EGOS

MARKO CINDRIC

Who are you? It is a fundamental question of any social environment and often the first thing on a person's mind when meeting someone new. When it comes to understanding a new subject, identification and definition are the primary steps in the process — *what are you?* We spend our entire lives refining our own identities and trying to identify with those that surround us. Identity is a way of communicating with the rest of the world, and it helps us bring our own unique ideas and opinions to the table. But what happens when your own persona doesn't match up with the idea you want to communicate? Don't panic. You can just create a new one.

From KISS's face paint to Lady Gaga's infamous meat dress, heavy use of costuming is widely used in the music industry. For decades, artists and bands have been crafting new identities for themselves by mutating their own, shrouding themselves in a veil of masks, wigs, and outfits. The phenomenon is becoming even more popular thanks to social media and viral videos, and the mystery and intrigue it generates is invaluable as a promotional tool. It also makes for some pretty incredible press photos. But at this point, it becomes important to make a differentiation: anybody can throw on a robot helmet and pretend every day is Halloween, but many musicians do this differently. Many musicians make the decision to become the robot.

Perhaps the most globally successful act in the mask-wearing business, Daft Punk has been doing this for two decades, and few groups have reached the same tier of mastery. Not only do French house virtuosos Guy-Manuel de Homem-Christo and Thomas Bangalter rarely grant interviews, they are notoriously good at keeping themselves hidden behind the robot helmets — and the robot personas — while in the public eye. Ridiculous? Perhaps to some, but the game-changing factor is that de Homem-Christo and Bangalter took their costumes seriously, and through this gesture they led us to do the same. The helmets weren't just randomly designed; the futuristic nature of the music had to be consolidated with an equally futuristic image, and that image manifested itself as a pair of suave robot humanoids. The personas that de Homem-Christo and Bangalter invented for themselves quickly became iconic, and not just within the EDM community but in the music industry as a whole.

But the question remains: why bother? Why not just be yourself?

Toronto-based electronic musician Zoo Owl is the up-and-coming alter ego of Avem Ondo, who transitions into the character during live performances with the help of goggles covered in clustered white LEDs. The result is a fascinating — albeit unsettling — live experience, with Zoo Owl often perching on various onstage items — an amplifier, for example — and seemingly gazing into each audience member's soul with his glowing, wide-eyed stare. "The lenses were a later addition, although from day one I hoped to

have an otherworldly presence while performing," Ondo said. "Using my birth name to promote the project would be inconsistent due to the traits I've developed channeling Zoo Owl."

Known for his role in electronic outfits Saturns and OPOPO, Ondo is a seasoned performer in the local music scene but chose to take a different approach with the Zoo Owl project, creating an entirely new image with its own characteristics and personality. However, he assured me, Zoo Owl is still very much an extension of his being: "I merged all my adventurous qualities into this persona, and I identify with its expressive traits. A transformation definitely takes place when I activate the lenses, but my personality is meant to dominate. It is for these reasons I don't exclusively perform with the lenses on, so that the audience can share in the transition.

"Plenty is uncovered through the separation [between myself and the Zoo Owl persona]. A constructed character will have its own psychological makeup and set of behaviours, so there is much to explore." Ondo went on to explain that the goggles and the persona they represent ultimately strive to give audience members a different concert-going experience than what they're used to. In addition, the persona extends beyond the performances, with cryptic, poetic statements making up most of Zoo Owl's Facebook and Twitter feed. "It all comes down to presence. What can people experience live? Who is being marketed? A vision can be executed easily through character-driven art, but it is no shortcut. Cheap gimmicks often fall short in the shadow of fully realized identities."

"Cheap gimmicks often fall short in the shadow of fully realized identities."

The current state of the music industry is turbulent at best, with most artists rarely breaking through to reach classical notions of fame and many struggling just to make ends meet. Terms like "saturated markets" and the "recycling age" pollute the air. With this in mind, I asked Ondo if creating a unique persona for new musical projects had, at some point, stopped being optional, especially in terms of attracting new fans and generating interest in new projects. I was met with refreshing optimism: "Musical content will always cut through as a deciding factor for intent listeners," Ondo said. "Marketability is a focus for some, but definitely not the majority of passionate musicians."

"There are many who will continue to play even when they abandon social media. Industry will typically ignore artists without strong numbers online. Still, there are endless channels for growth and getting 'noticed' by industry reps has become much less important."

Ultimately, it seems there is a lot going on in human psychology when an artist chooses to develop a new persona through masks and costuming: fear of the unknown collides with insatiable intrigue; concerts become puzzles; music becomes multimedia performance art. Not only is this beneficial to an artist's marketing, but it creates an added depth to the listening experience that will inevitably attract eager show-goers.

Whether an artist is wearing a giant mouse head, a robot helmet, LED goggles, face paint, or whatever else they might come up with, they are effectively altering their image, and the extent to which they do this is where alternate personas truly begin to manifest themselves. For instance, EDM producer deadmau5 noticeably retains his personality as Joel Zimmerman while wearing his various mouse helmets, a stark contrast to what Avem Ondo describes as Daft Punk's total abandonment of their human selves for the sake of the robot image.

Some artists even create multiple personas, one for each performance: "Björk is a gift," said Ondo, citing the Icelandic songstress as a source of inspiration in the development of the Zoo Owl character. "She is so unpredictable and becomes all these different characters while preserving her essence at the core. It's a great lesson to delight in your own ingenuity the way she does, like a proud kid showing off their monster costume."

So are there any disadvantages to being masked? Ondo's response was short and direct, with a powerful degree of certainty to it. "Only to become unrecognizable."

BOOKING YOUR FIRST SHOW

HOW DO YOU GO FROM JAMMING IN YOUR FRIEND'S BASEMENT TO GRACING A REAL STAGE? IT CAN BE A STRUGGLE TO GET NOTICED IN A CITY AS LARGE AS TORONTO, BUT WITH SOME INGENUITY AND CREATIVITY IT CAN CERTAINLY HAPPEN. BELOW, DEMO INVESTIGATES TORONTO'S PROLIFIC DIY SCENE AS WELL AS A YOUNG COMPANY THAT PUTS ON SHOWS ACROSS THE CITY.

PILES AND PILES (ALEX POST)

DIY IS THE ANSWER

AL JANUSIS

If you wanted to be in a band and start playing shows, why would you wait until someone else gave you permission to do so? The entire point of music is that it is a vehicle for self-expression and if that means it is constrained by an outside party, doesn't that compromise the entirety of your artistic vision? Although there are plenty of acts out there willing to run the established gamut of venues, there are a number of others who do not wish to aspire to another's artistic goals. If you don't want to be judged based on a set of criteria that you believe does not apply to you — if you don't feel at home within the system in place — what's a band to do? DIY (do-it-yourself) is the answer.

An introduction to DIY can occur in numerous ways. Matt Cuthbert, vocalist of Toronto screamo band Foxmoulder, founder of now defunct record label A Mountain Far, and U of T alumnus, recalls hearing the stories of Minor Threat tearing apart record packaging to discover how to glue together their own. "I would assume," Cuthbert said, "that what a lot of people get encouraged or drawn toward is, more often than not, we have no real concept what we're doing."

Getting your hands dirty certainly can be intimidating, but there is comfort in finding other people willing to do the same. Lauren Boyko, an OCAD student and member of folk-punk group Stick and Poke, spoke to this and stated that it was at the encouragement of her friends that she entered the world of DIY. "The importance of newcomers is great so the scene can remain strong." She went on to say that "this community gives you support in whatever you endeavour and encouragement to all in all 'be yourself.'"

Luke Huszar, a second year Cognitive Science student at U of T and guitarist of math rock/shoegaze trio Piles and Piles, explained that it was his brother who brought him into the fold. "My brother has been in bands his entire life and I would always make it a point to go to their shows. His current band, The Sharpest, has been around for like six years now and they always played a lot of DIY shows in Boston and Amherst." Above all, the people he encountered made him all the more willing to return. "Just getting to hang out with like-minded people and enjoying music I love in an up close and intimate setting was ideal for me."

Within Toronto there are number of spaces that specifically cater to DIY-minded bands and the communities they wish to foster: Soybomb HQ, The Shop under Parts & Labour, Double Double Land, Izakaya Sushi House, and Skramden Yards. These places are what Cuthbert describes as "playgrounds for a group of people to gather and do their artistic things."

This is a major difference from the city's bars and music halls where the atmosphere is often affected by their status as businesses. "Whether we'd like it or not these professional entities feel like an entirely different world. It's like a parallel dimension in a way," said Cuthbert. He never imagined using booking agents or promoting agencies in his creative endeavours and so researched what it is they exactly do in order to do it himself. This is the spirit of DIY culture — have a hand in every aspect of your project and you have more control over your agency. Cuthbert explained, "The professional capacity of people whose job it is to book shows — talent buyers — they're really not doing much work. A good promoter is one who really does a good job of getting the word out there, but for the most part it's the bands who do that."

Al Janusis is a second year student from the Metro Detroit area studying English. When not reading, writing, or watching films, he often can be found wandering around Toronto in hopes of finding a show under ten dollars.

Perhaps you have taken an interest in DIY now and are considering booking a show, but a lingering question may remain: if you do not know someone already in the community, how do you get involved? Boyko suggests, "Attend a lot of shows in the genre of music you wish to book. At these shows talk to many people and make as many connections and friends as possible."

Huszar elaborates further, "Once you get your name out there it becomes easier to find shows. Just from putting our EP on Bandcamp/4chan/Reddit we got invites from bands all over asking if we wanted to play shows."

Lucratively utilizing online resources especially bears importance today where most bands, DIY or not, are publicizing for themselves through Facebook. In the digital age, everyone's become more DIY-inclined, but the true measure of difference comes from the entirety of the artistic project. Instead of relying on record labels, eschewing them in favour of online distribution hubs like Bandcamp give bands more control over the property rights of their written material. There is no fussing with contractual obligations; the music simply is yours. As an artist, why wouldn't you desire that?

The most wonderful aspect of DIY is that while it may seem to be intimately connected with a small number of underground genres and communities that follow them, in reality it is nothing more than a method to allow for the most amount of room to determine your goals. It is a tool that injects a surge into the community it fosters because it is quite difficult

STICK AND POKE (ALFRED C)

to be apathetic about your project when, in order to properly get across the noise coming from all the available channels, you have to be your largest supporter. So go out and silkscreen your own t-shirts, open your basement to four bands this Friday, pass around a hat to cover the door charge, and enjoy the camaraderie.

A CHAT WITH
BIG THINGS PRODUCTIONS
AVIVA LEV-AVIV

Big Things Productions is a Toronto-based concert production company run by Vanessa Marie Rose and Valerie Drinkwalter. The talented duo are passionate about what they do and have tons of helpful tips for aspiring artists and music industry professionals.

Demo: Firstly, tell us a little bit about what you do and about Big Things Productions!

Valerie Drinkwalter: Well, Vanessa and I started Big Things just over a year ago. We put on shows of all different genres all over the city.

Vanessa Marie Rose: Exactly, anything from pop punk to hip hop. We work with a lot of touring acts that come through as well and are sitting with just over 50 shows on our belt.

D: Where did the idea come from and why did you decide to make it happen?

VD: Vanessa and I met while volunteering at a music festival. We quickly realized that we were meant to be best friends. Both of us wanted to work in music, so we started it for ourselves.

D: How did you learn to do what you do?

VR: I have a strong background in theatre, having acted and directed my entire life. Music has always been a passion of mine and I learned really great live technical skills from the theatre role. I moved into music, began volunteering and stage managing for festivals, and it snowballed from there.

VD: Basically, you learn by doing. I started putting on shows when I was in high school. I'm from up North so I would have to travel two and a half hours to Winnipeg any time I wanted to see an all-ages show. It was really expensive so I started to bring the bands to me. In college I worked with the student government as their VP of Entertainment which involved assisting with shows and other activities. After all of that was over I moved to Toronto and started volunteering with festivals.

D: How do you establish connections with the bands you want to work with?

VD: Basically by being super friendly, not an a**hole. Not only do Vanessa and I put on shows, but we go to shows too. Toronto has an amazing music scene and if we like a band or artist we will tell them. We also find bands through other bands that recommend them and through online submissions.

JAPANTS (YOSHI COOPER)

THE C'MONS (ANDREW SZTEIN)

D: How do you use social media in your business?

VR: It's everything. You have to be able to connect to your audience and the only way you can these days is through the internet. A simple text, call, or e-mail to your friends works but social media is the way to connect it and tie it all together. You meet like-minded individuals and discover music through events. It makes it easy to collaborate, share information on our shows, and get the word out. It's essential and in this day and age the strongest marketing tool we have.

D: What has been most difficult part of the process and the most rewarding?

VD: The most difficult thing would probably be that we would love to put on a show every day, but it isn't realistic. We really put in a lot of strategy when we book our shows.

VR: The most rewarding part for me is the quality of our shows. Often promoters try to pack tons of bills just to get a buck, which isn't bad because there is a lot of music that needs to be heard, however we really take our time. Quality over quantity.

D: What traits does a successful concert organizer absolutely need?

VD: You need to be able to prioritize your time, be able to promote without sounding repetitive, be able to communicate with the bands/venue owners, understand social media. The most important thing is that you want to do this for the love of music. Love music and don't be a jerk.

D: What do you look for in bands?

VD: It's all about the music. That is the most important thing. Also bands who have a great attitude, know that they have to work, and want to build the music community.

VR: Along with great music, the work ethic of a band. If you are a great band but have a poor attitude you will get nowhere. This is the smallest community ever.

D: What do you recommend for bands first starting out/any common mistakes you see bands making in efforts to promote themselves?

VD: Common mistake would be inviting every single person you know and their mothers/pets to every gig. When you're starting out you are still finding your sound and people might not want to see the same set over and over again. Invite a few people, get feedback, grow, and continue gigging.

VR: The "5 W's" are the questions all acts need to be thinking of, especially in the beginning. Who is your target audience? What is your plan? When do you want to accomplish it by? Where is your market? Why are you playing? Make good music, create a plan, and do work! Drive is the only thing that will set you apart. For promotion, it looks really horrible when you have a public profile online and you are only doing consistent show pushes or only pushing your content out there. You need a voice and unique content. It's like spamming a bunch of e-mails in the public eye. Replicate your offline contacts online first, and then expand. Continue doing so at shows. Capture emails; get people to follow you [on Twitter], right in front of you. Don't assume they will when they get home.

D: How do you recommend other promoters/people looking to get into industry start out?

VD: Volunteering at festivals will teach you so, so much. It will teach you the hands-on skills you need as well as surrounding you with people you can network with.

D: What do you like best about the Toronto music scene?

VR: How genres always support other genres. You see the same crowds at the same type of shows. It's quite humbling to see so many different communities really supporting one another. This city is a gem in itself.

VD: I love the music scene here. Most people are in it to build the music community. Everyone is a lot friendlier than you think and the music itself is amazing. There is so much talent in this city.

Find out more about Big Things and check out their show listings at facebook.com/BigThingsProductions.

Aviva Lev-Aviv is a second year student studying media and music history. She's crazy about all things music – especially seeing live shows, singing, and playing guitar (yet she's always known her spirit animal is a drummer!). She loves bands from all different genres, from punk to blues to Latin, but she will always come back to her ultimate love, Led Zeppelin. Otherwise, Aviva can be found exploring Toronto, practicing salsa dancing, or watching cooking shows with her three rad sisters.

KANYE WEST (MEDIA PHOTO)

MILEY CYRUS (MEDIA PHOTO)

WOLFGANG AMADEUS MOZART

SUFJAN STEVENS (MEDIA PHOTO)

GARBAGE (MEDIA PHOTO)

YOU ARE WHAT YOU LISTEN TO

THE LINK BETWEEN MUSIC TASTE AND PERSONALITY

SIAN LAST

Given the number of stereotypes surrounding music choice and personality, it has long been customarily accepted that there is a strong link between the two. However, there have been remarkably few psychological studies on the issue.

A study from the University of Texas at Austin set out to provide an empirical link between personality and music taste. In an article titled "The Do Re Mi's of Everyday Life: The Structure and Personality Correlates of Music Preferences," Peter J. Rentfrow and Samuel D. Gosling conducted four different studies to unearth some kind of scientifically measurable link between music preferences and personalities.

Study participants perceived that their music choices were highly correlated to their own personalities. Whether or not this is true, participants wanted their music preferences to be illustrative of their personalities, interests, and hobbies. This is important to note, because the study was conducted on the premise that subjects could identify their own personality traits and music preferences.

One interesting discovery from the study was the lack of any correlation between depression, anxiety, or mental stability and music choices. This lack of correlation is excused with the explanation that all categories of music are able to express a wide range of emotions.

Genres of music were divided up into four distinct categories: reflective and complex (blues, folk, jazz), intense and rebellious (punk, rock, rap), upbeat and conventional (pop), and energetic and rhythmic (house, electronic).

Links were found between these categories and personality traits. After listening to ten randomly selected songs from the music libraries of study participants, the researchers found they could actually predict the personality traits participants self-identified with.

For the most part, many stereotypes about music preferences were actually backed up by the study. Listeners of pop music are in fact more social than those who listen to mellow folk and rock. People who listen to classical and jazz music perceive themselves as intelligent and cultured.

However, it is also worth noting that music in and of itself is often a part of larger social contexts. More extraverted people tend to go out more and thus listen to more pop and dance music than introverted people. In this sense, the study is a bit of a self-fulfilling prophecy.

This logic can be furthered to say that music choice itself does not arise from specific personality types; it is a tool through which people find groups and interests, and in these ways find self-definition. Every kind of music exists as one aspect of a more complex social and cultural niche.

Nonetheless, it's fun to stereotype the music tastes of myself and others with science firmly on my side.

Sian Last is a second year student pursuing a double major in Art History and Peace, Conflict, and Justice Studies. She loves music and Demo Magazine. Some of her current musical obsessions include Lucius, Kopecky Family Band, Dessa, and James Blake. When she is not shoulders-deep in her school readings, Sian enjoys going to just about any concert, exploring Toronto, writing, and playing her ukulele, Sally.

ANATOMY OF AN ALBUM COVER

AN INTERVIEW WITH ARTIST KEITH RANKIN

MARIA SOKULSKY-DOLNYCKY

When I browse a record store looking for new albums to buy, what are the first things to catch my eye? The albums with the most interesting cover art, no doubt. Since 1938, album covers have been gracing the fronts (and backs) of record sleeves; they are what draws consumers in at first glance, enticing them to pick up a record and be immersed in a work of art both visual and musical. The album cover has gained importance and has become a part of music culture. But not all album covers are created equal; some have made a lasting impact, like The Beatles' iconic *Sgt. Pepper's Lonely Hearts Club Band* or Pink Floyd's *Dark Side of the Moon*, while others have not. Art has the ability to transcend cultural and generational borders and touch the masses. Album artwork can simultaneously be universal as well as very personal, and everyone has their favourite album covers and their own reasons as to why they like them.

I had the pleasure of chatting with Keith Rankin, who does the cover art for artists signed to Orange Milk Records, a Brooklyn-based record label, and I picked his brain to find out his thoughts about album art and its connection to the music inside.

Demo: When / how did you get into art? What is your art background?

Keith Rankin: I got into art at the same time almost everyone does, I think, when they're just a few years old. Or old enough to make sense of shapes and being inside a physical space, realizing that you can make a mark on a piece of paper or anything else, and being excited by that initial creation. I would say that excitement at creation is a core part of being a human, dating back to the first person who took a stick and made a symbol on the ground and said "this means something." It's sad to me when people begrudge their lack of artistic "talent," or say "I wish I could make something," because I think "You can!" Everyone has that artistic impulse inside them somewhere, even if it doesn't comply with current conventions of aesthetic beauty or whatever, if they are curious enough to look inward and explore things, it's there. So that curiosity fills my background and keeps driving me forward.

D: What is the creative process behind designing album covers? Do you listen to the album and then draw inspiration from the music, or do musicians approach you with their own ideas? How do you connect the musician's vision to what you create?

KR: I like to listen to the album and try to evoke a similar kind of feeling in the visuals that I get from the sounds. Sometimes artists will have visual requests or a specific style they want to convey, and while I honor those requests, first I have to please myself and make something I find interesting, otherwise it's pointless and no fun. I look at the process as a collaboration; the musician has made one segment of the art piece, and I'm completing it.

D: How do you think albums and their album covers are tied together? How do you think the art on the front of an album represents the art contained within it?

KR: My favourite cover art usually seems to line up with the audio in a strangely specific way. But then again, a lot of the time the visuals inform and recontextualize the music, and vice versa, so the really important part is that the two mediums are smashed together in the first place to create something new.

D: What, in your opinion, makes a great album cover?

KR: When it's difficult to separate the audio and the visuals without losing something, then I think you have a successful piece of work.

D: What, in your opinion, are some of the most well-done album covers throughout history, and why do you think they're so great? What about them has allowed them to withstand the test of time? Why are they effective at representing the music and/or attracting an audience?

KR: There are so many, but I'll just stick with one example for the sake of time. I love the cover for Glenn Branca's *The Ascension*, with what looks like two businessmen in the middle of a fight. I think one of them is supposed to be Branca himself, but I have no idea about the background or the artist who did the piece. All I know is the impression it gives while listening to the music: a kind of fascist, monolithic rigidness mixed with the big power and volume of the guitars. Something almost abstract is captured there, it plays on associations, what we read into just by seeing a person in a suit and tie, our intrinsic awe of power, an inbuilt willingness to believe in status and authority in our society, but then skews all of that by putting the suit and tie in a compromising position. We immediately find it almost unfitting, but that's the great part, that it exposes the cultural or mental dissonance inside us. I guess that reading could be completely wrong, but the music fits that description too, with the energy of early punk music operating inside the framework of discipline and compositional structure. You could read the whole work as being either totally fascist or totally punk, but it's not as simple as that, it's probably both, which if you really think about it is an insane and interesting prospect. I love that the album cover ever begins to suggest that.

JOSH TILLMAN (MARIA SOKULSKY-DOLNYCKY)

Shut Up and Play the Hits

The Price of Admission and the Price of Entitlement

ERIK MASSON

When you buy a ticket to see a concert, what exactly are you getting for your money? The obvious answer is that you are buying the right to see the show, but it seems that some audience members seem to have the idea that their ticket also gives them the right to demand certain things from an artist. When he strode onstage for the encore of his Danforth Music Hall show in August, Josh Tillman (AKA Father John Misty, psychedelic folk extraordinaire and former percussionist of Fleet Foxes) sought to give the audience something more than the excellent performance he had just completed — he tried to give the audience a momentary glimpse behind the curtain of professionalism by explaining some of his feelings and actions. The crowd seemed to think that because they had given him their hard-earned money, they could yell at him to try to get him to shut up and play a song. So he obligingly yelled back and threw his guitar on the ground before walking off of the stage.

Upon hearing this story, some snort derisively before engaging in a lofty diatribe on the nature of professionalism and Tillman's clearly offensive lack thereof. Others, however, think that his reaction was appropriate, and that it was the audience who erred. "I think that if you've paid to see a movie and you just didn't like it, you wouldn't go to the box office and try to get your money back," said Mark Ferrari, singer/guitarist of Toronto band The Folk. "You'd just say, 'Aw, that was a crappy movie.' If you've paid a band, I see it as you giving yourself over to the show and

you have to deal with whatever the hell is gonna happen onstage … If you don't go into a show with somewhat of an open mind, you're sort of missing the point."

Yet the incident at Tillman's Toronto show asserts that many music fans have motivations other than keeping an open mind; they are seeking entertainment value above all else. "I feel that for more popular bands, the hits are what people identify with the most," said Adam Bradley, concert programmer for Wavelength Music Arts Projects. "If they can sing along, dance along, or have pleasant memories triggered by hearing familiar music, of course most would seek that directly … That's why I imagine many audiences at more popular concerts can get so violently offended by new material or extended banter. It's because they feel that they're being robbed of something. It's right there in the title of LCD Soundsystem's documentary *Shut Up and Play the Hits*."

But if audiences are missing the point by focusing on hearing the hits, what is it that they are missing out on? "I'm far more interested in the idea of music being something that should hit you square," Bradley said. "Sublime, ineffable. And if you're just impatiently waiting to hear the song that reminds you of summer 2010, you're possibly missing a rare chance to be swept into something personal, beautiful, fragile and, god-forbid, original."

The heart of the problem may be that musicians and audiences often disagree on what the musician is there to do. "The job of the artist is to connect people to the other perspectives out there," said actor and filmmaker Nate Shepherd. "I think the job of an entertainer is to please people, and that's for the audience. The artist is sharing their perspective with the audience, so it's about the artist's perspective, not the audience's."

The question is: why do audiences disagree? It seems that the answer lies in the fact that many art forms, particularly music and film, have become very heavily tied to entertainment, and in many ways the two functions have melded. More importantly, a significant portion of the artistic community learned very early on that pleasing an audience with an already-approved formula leads to financial success. "Andy Koffman called it 'canned humour,'" explains Shepherd. "[The joke] is there, I just need to put it in a film and it's guaranteed to make people laugh." The same principle of continuously trying to please a crowd carries over to the art of music.

But not all artists have adopted this approach. "If you're calling yourself an artist, I don't think you should feel obligated to necessarily charm a crowd by any means," said Ferrari. "I think that challenging a crowd is just as artistically viable, as long as at the end of it you've at least elicited a response … if you're going to consider yourself a musician and an artist then you should play the way you feel like you should play and not concern yourself necessarily with how an audience member will react."

No one wants to be the beret-clad elitist telling people how to enjoy their art; or a cranial Simon Cowell, running around telling people what is music and what is not, what is good and what is bad. But perhaps more audiences would enjoy their concerts if they rid themselves of whatever expectations and demands they may have and simply approached the artist to see what they have to show.

"There has to be a sense of openness," said Shepherd. "If I go to a new art gallery and I don't get it, I may immediately think that I've wasted my time and money, but maybe I'll sit there and think about it and realize what's going on."

Just remember: the letters musicians have chosen to represent the career with which they define themselves spell artist, not entertainer.

Erik Masson is a history student whose year designation is ambiguous. He hails from a few different places but was born somewhere in New Brunswick. When not tending the gardens of his fellow citizens or barrelling his way through tedious essays about people who all died a very long time ago, he likes to listen to music, preferably in some basement with a really loud band playing directly in front of him. It doesn't particularly matter what they're playing as long as he can dance to it. His only goal in life is to have four walls and adobe slabs for his girls.

ANTONY HEGARTY (MEDIA PHOTO)

I AM A BIRD NOW

WILL HE MAKE IT TO THE RAPTURE?

THE CULTURAL RELEVANCE OF ANTONY HEGARTY OF ANTONY & THE JOHNSONS

MELISSA VINCENT

The opening chords of "Twilight" by Antony & The Johnsons are of an entirely harrowing nature. Complemented by singer Antony Hegarty's fragile vocals, delicately ascending keys manifest into a dramatic orchestral flourish as his voice gradually grows more powerful alongside it. It is the first song, Hegarty's first formal presentation as an artist, from a self-titled debut album which would become the structure to one of the most stunning collections of music from any artist in modern times.

Hegarty's musical and artistic background is a rich one to delve into. He has performed his music with some of the most prestigious orchestras around the world, been awarded the esteemed Mercury Award for his 2005 effort, *I Am a Bird Now*, and last year he curated the prestigious Meltdown Festival. As an indication of the company he keeps, past curators of the same festival have included David Bowie, Nick Cave, and Patti Smith. In a distinguished art sphere where album sales matter less than critical acclaim and evolving artistry, Hegarty is a prolific and prominent figure.

Despite his accomplishments, questions can be raised about whether his work is capable of remaining relevant over time. Whether it's defined as polished folk or elementally classic with a modern twist, exciting new innovators pop up each week, challenging the vitality of an artist fond of recycled sounds. Hegarty creates music that is familiar but inaccessible. The polar opposite of what is typically played on the radio or at a club, his music requires a shovel to be dug up then a sifter to truly understand its crevices.

While perhaps not exactly what casual listeners seek out, his music is necessary for them to listen to. Classical music is embedded in our collective global culture from major theological institutions to our national anthems; thus by overexposure we have become desensitized to the sounds of grandeur that these formats employ.

Hegarty has given us a new way of listening to accustomed tones. By attaching unsheathed lyrics flattered with contemporary values, a richly textured, bone-tingling compromise is met as he tackles themes such as trans issues, family dynamics, and mortality from another angle. Take, for instance, "I Fell in Love with a Dead Boy." Hegarty cleverly slips a reflection of sexual identity into an overall narrative of a love so strong that emotional actions take precedence over practical reasoning.

Despite insisting that the focus be put on his music, it could be speculated that Hegarty uses his sexuality as a guise

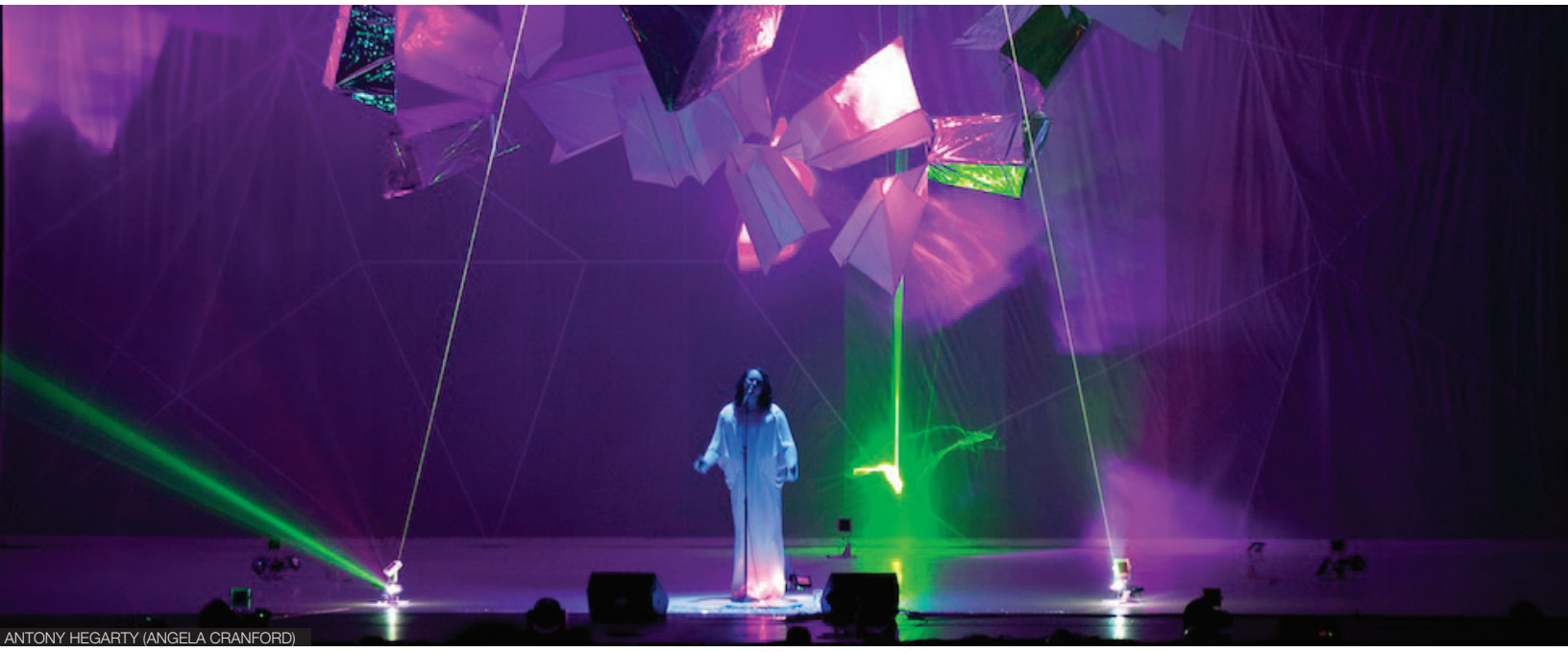
to hide behind or even amplify interest in his endeavours. Identifying himself as a transgendered artist, Antony Hegarty has managed a feat nearly unparalleled in the context of modern music. His art, which spans several platforms, has reached a level of interest where his music intrigues his audience before his sexuality becomes a topic of discussion. A fearless voice in a community that many have attempted to silence, every addition to his catalogue, such as his brilliant rendition of Beyoncé's "Crazy in Love," is one that employs an unparalleled confidence.

For decades, concern about the state our environment has been the "en vogue" biodegradable bandwagon of choice. With Radiohead using biofuel for their tour buses and Texas indie band Okkervil River encouraging fans to use sustainable ways to arrive at their shows, being conscious of our physical livelihoods has now become intertwined with the identity of the modern artist. This raises the question of whether Hegarty, who has often criticized our attitude towards our planet, is part of this shared crusade to appear as socially conscious as possible. Is it authentic, or simply a façade? Furthermore, what right do artists have to speak about issues outside of their respective field?

Seldom have other individuals — musicians, ecologists or otherwise — spoken about the world we reside on quite like Hegarty. Bypassing the physical necessity of living on a healthy planet, Hegarty describes our world as a spiritual extension of ourselves. To him, all of nature is a mirror for the richness of our own preciousness, which is an ideal he holds deeply and emphasizes frequently in this music. The notion that the world is not only a Mother with feminine characteristics, but also a creative entity, has led him to found the Future Feminist Foundation, which includes a collection of friends and collaborators who share a forward-thinking mentality towards the Earth and support women leading economic, political, and religious intuitions.

In Hegarty's most recent album, *Cut the World* (2012), a live compilation album recorded with the Danish National Chamber Orchestra, the second song, aptly titled "Future Feminism," is a nearly 8-minute-long monologue describing everything from our homeopathic relationship with the ocean tides to the struggle of female political figures trapped in patriarchal, monotheistic societies. These are bold statements, but essential ones, as they summarize the ideas he has been alluding to for more than a decade.

Lou Reed, lead singer of The Velvet Underground, and arguably one of the most influential figures in rock in the last 50 years, is usually reserved with compliments. Upon experiencing Antony Hegarty perform, he once said, "When I heard him, I knew I was in the presence of an angel." For Hegarty's devotion to creating art not only nakedly humanistic at its core, but constructed with a deep reverence for all life on earth, few would beg to differ.



ANTONY HEGARTY (ANGELA CRANFORD)

Melissa Vincent is a first year Linguistics student too interested in everything to decide on a minor quite yet. She is an adorer of literally all the sounds we treat our ears to, and thinking of "best of" lists in any category gives her heart palpitations. A head in the clouds, lover of all earth dwellers, she'll still get down to Deafheaven and Michael Gira any day. When Neutral Milk Hotel reunited she cried on the bus. A lot. People stared in shock. She didn't care, and then an old man gave her a hug. They remain friends to this day.

TORONTO MUSICIANS: WHAT'S GREAT ABOUT TORONTO'S MUSIC SCENE?

COMPILED BY ELENA GRITZAN

Toronto is an amazing hub for music of all sorts. There are a million "scenes" within the larger one. One of our favourite parts is the DIY aspect. There are all these hidden gems in the city, scattered by some motivated artists. You can catch some of the most fun shows at some off-kilter spaces: The White House is an artist studio, Double Double Land is tucked in an alleyway, and Soybomb is basically a room with a half-pipe. Then there are music series like Feast in The East that showcases an eclectic mix of music, while offering delicious healthy meals at an affordable price.

Other than keeping your ear to the ground — or, rather, your eyes open — for homemade posters, the best way to find out about some of these DIY shows is to pick up a copy of independent, artist-run publication *Offerings* that documents "Toronto's Anomalous Music Scene." Last, there are a handful of small record labels, some of which are musician-run, that keep it real and put out fantastic bands: Calico Corp, Pleasence, Not Unlike, Telephone Explosion, Buzz, Pretty Pretty, and the one that we run, Daps Records.

— Phèdre

PHÈDRE (MAYA FUHR)

YACHT CLUB (MEDIA PHOTO)

What I love the most about Toronto I also hate the most about Toronto. A great local band can play as many cool shows as they like from Wavelength parties to off-location Extermination Parties. People may care for a minute. Your journalist friend may write about you in a local clueless paper. If you were signed with Paper Bag at one point you may even have scored a cover photo. Is anyone going to buy your record? Nah. Are your shows going to organically grow through word of mouth support throughout the city? No, probably the opposite. "Ya they are great, but that drummer bumped into my girlfriend at Ronnie's, boo hoo."

We, as a city, make you work for it like no other. You must cross borders. We force our bands out of their comfortable Facebook network of 150 friends to hit the road. We are scared to love things — to form a solid opinion. But when our exports start to grow outside of the bubble, we come crawling back like we always knew and show them the love they deserved all along. I do believe this strange environment separates our serious acts from the acts that should never be heard. I can't remember the last time I heard a Brooklyn band that didn't make me want to choke on a cronut, how much easier it must be for them to be seen by the "tastemakers" who feed the Pitchfork machine. As Torontonians we have no serious geographical advantage yet, unless you are in the hot bed of rap led by Drake (although it remains to be seen if the world will take any of our other hip hop artists seriously, let alone ourselves).

From our infamous moron mayor to our uniquely supported music culture, I sometimes wonder if, as a city, we really hate ourselves this much? Whatever the answer may be, I truly love this place, I love its bands and I love its people but, Toronto, "you better work."

— Ben Cook (Young Guv / Yacht Club / F***ed Up)

WHAT ARE YOU LISTENING TO?

AVIVA LEV-AVIV | PHOTOGRAPHY BY EMILY SCHERZINGER

LUKE DRAYTON
PHILOSOPHY, 4TH YEAR

"WATERFRONT"
JOHN LEE HOOKER

GREG YERASHOTIS
SOCIOLOGY, GRAD STUDENT

"OCTOBER"
BROKEN BELLS

LENNIE N.
POLITICAL SCIENCE, 4TH YEAR

"MURDA BIZNESS"
IGGY AZALEA

DOMINIKA KORPOVA
INTERNATIONAL RELATIONS, 4TH YEAR

"SAME LOVE"
MACKLEMORE & RYAN LEWIS

ELIN MACRAE
HUMANITIES, 1ST YEAR

"APRIL"
IMAGINARY FRIEND

TAMIRA MCCOY
ARCHITECTURE, 2ND YEAR

"FROM TIME"
DRAKE

IHSAN ETWAROO
COMPUTER SCIENCE, 1ST YEAR

"FURTHEST THING"
DRAKE

MATTEO GUINCI
POLITICAL SCIENCE, 4TH YEAR

"SORROWING MAN"
CITY AND COLOUR

HartHouse